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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 000849

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/09/16
TAGS: [PREL](#) [CI](#)
SUBJECT: Ecuador UNASUR meeting

CLASSIFIED BY: Paul E. Simons, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) On September 16, Ambassador spoke briefly with Foreign Minister Fernandez, Defense Minister Vidal, and Defense Undersecretary Garcia about the September 15 UNASUR ministerial in Quito.

¶2. (C) According to Fernandez, the meeting was extremely difficult and produced no consensus.

-- The Colombian Defense and Foreign Ministers were unwilling to accommodate any requests for follow-on information on the DCA, in particular from the Brazilians, who were looking for written assurances regarding the protections in the agreement on cross-border activities.

--The Colombians insisted verbally that the agreement was benign but were unwilling to go further. In Fernandez' view, the Colombians could easily provide some preambular language that would go a long way to satisfy Brazil's concerns, but were thoroughly dug in.

--Fernandez thought the Secretary's pre-Bariloche UNASUR letter was very helpful, and he said he even read it aloud to his fellow Ministers at the meeting (none of whom had apparently seen the letter ahead of time). Fernandez is interested in seeing whether we might be willing to follow up on the offer in the letter for further consultations to clarify portions of the DCA. Fernandez will be in Washington September 21 and hopes to raise some of these concerns with Department officials.

--Separately, Defense Undersecretary Garcia (who represented the MOD) was even more pessimistic about the Quito meeting, noting that UNASUR was in a crisis and that it would be difficult to move behind current dug in positions. Defense Minister Vidal (who skipped the meeting) said he made the right choice to avoid what was clearly an unproductive session.
SIMONS